

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A control system for selectively prohibiting a communications connection
5 between an origin and destination within a communications network, the system comprising:
 - at least one list of prohibited destination identifiers;
 - at least one list of exempted destination identifiers; and
 - a control unit that prohibits or allows the communications connection
10 between the origin and destination based on one or more mediation rules and the lists of prohibited and exempted destination identifiers.
2. The system according to Claim 1 wherein the origin and destination are each a
15 communications device directly or indirectly connected to the communications network.
3. The system according to Claim 2 wherein the communications device is any one
of a telephone, cellular telephone, personal digital assistance, pager, computer,
client interface, and remote computer terminal.
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4. The system according to Claim 1 further comprising a connection unit that
receives or initiates a request for a communications connection between an
origin and destination, the request including the destination identifier; the
connection unit capable of sending a request to the control unit and receiving an
25 order from the control unit to prohibit or allow the communications connection.
5. The system according to Claim 4 wherein the connection unit is any one of an
Interactive Voice Response application, a predictive dialer server, a distributed
predictive dialer system, a switch, router, and an electronic mail server.

6. The system according to Claim 4 wherein the connection unit establishes a communications connection between an origin and destination.
- 5 7. The system according to Claim 1 wherein the destination identifier is a communications device address.
8. The system according to Claim 7 wherein the device address is any one of a telephone number, Internet Protocol address, Internet Domain Name, and an
10 electronic mail address.
9. The system according to Claim 1 wherein the lists are contained within one or more tables of one or more databases.
- 15 10. The system according to Claim 1 wherein the lists of prohibited destination identifiers are derived from any one or a combination of a Federal Do-Not-Call list, a State Do-Not-Call list, a DMA list, Wireless do-Not-Call list, a client internal list, and a Very Important Person list.
- 20 11. The system according to Claim 1 wherein the lists of exempted destination identifiers are derived from any one or a combination of an Existing Business Relationship (EBR) exemption list, Do-Not-Call exemption lists, State Do-Not-Call exemption list, a VIP exemption list, and other exemption list.
- 25 12. The system according to Claim 11 wherein the exemption list contains any one or combination of exemption key, type, and date of contact associated with each exempted destination identifier.

13. The system according to Claim 1 wherein the mediation rules comprise a sequence of comparisons made between a destination identifier and one or more lists of exempted and prohibited identifiers.
- 5 14. The system according to Claim 13 wherein each comparison with a list of exempted identifiers determines whether the comparison with an associated list or lists of prohibited destination identifiers is bypassed or ignored.
- 10 15. The system according to Claim 1 wherein the prohibited and exempted destination lists are capable of being modified from the origin.
16. The system according to Claim 1 wherein the prohibited and exempted destination lists are capable of being modified from a secondary interface.
- 15 17. The system according to Claim 1 wherein the control unit is a computer server that resides on the premises of any one of a client, a local exchange carrier, local administration facility, central administration facility, and other remote facility.
- 20 18. The system according to Claim 17 wherein the control unit interfaces with local prohibited and exempted destination lists; the local prohibited and exempted destination lists being periodically synchronized with other prohibited and exempted destination lists; the other prohibited and exempted destination lists being remotely located at another facility such as a local administration facility, local exchange carrier, central administration facility, or other facility.
- 25 19. The system according to Claim 1 wherein the control unit is a software application within a remote client computer.

20. The system according to Claim 19 wherein the control unit within a client computer remotely accesses the prohibited and exempted lists within a central administration facility.
- 5 21. The system according to Claim 1 wherein prohibited and exempted destination lists may be dynamically added or removed and the mediation rules updated to flexibly adapt the system to continuously support new connection prohibition rules.
- 10 22. The system according to Claim 1 wherein a plurality of destination identifiers are examined in relation to a particular origin to determine whether to prohibit or allow a communications connection between the origin and each destination of the plurality of destinations.
- 15 23. The system according to Claim 1 wherein a client user is identified and authenticated.
24. The system according to Claim 1 wherein the control unit, based on the mediation rules, uses additional client and customer information to determine
20 whether to prohibit or allow a communications connection.
25. The system according to Claim 24 wherein the information includes any one or combination of a client user identifier, client identifier, customer identifier, client office identifier, product identifier, geographic area, date, time, exemption
25 type duration, origin identifier, internal client criteria, and internal customer criteria.
26. The system according to Claim 1 wherein logs of prohibited, allowed, and improper destination identifiers or a combination thereof are generated.

27. A method of selectively prohibiting a communications connection between an origin and destination in a communications network, the method comprising:
receiving or initiating a connection request for a communication
connection between an origin and destination, the request including the
destination identifier;
prohibiting or allowing the requested communications connection based
on one or more mediation rules and lists of prohibited and exempted destination
identifiers.
28. The method according to Claim 27 wherein the origin and destination are each a
communications device connected directly or indirectly to the communications
network.
29. The method according to Claim 28 wherein the communications device is any
one of a telephone, cellular telephone, personal digital assistance, pager,
computer, computer client interface, and remote computer terminal.
30. The method according to Claim 27 wherein the receiving or initiating of a
request is performed by a connection unit.
31. The method according to Claim 30 wherein the connection unit is any one of an
Interactive Voice Response application, a predictive dialer server, a distributed
predictive dialer system, a switch, router, and an electronic mail server.
32. The method according to Claim 31 wherein the connection unit establishes a
communications connection between an origin and destination.
33. The method according to Claim 27 wherein the destination identifier is a
communications device address.

34. The method according to Claim 33 wherein the device address is any one of a telephone number, Internet Protocol address, Internet Domain Name, and an electronic mail address.
- 5 35. The method according to Claim 27 wherein the lists are contained within one or more tables of one or more databases.
36. The method according to Claim 27 wherein the lists of prohibited destination identifiers are derived from any one or a combination of a Federal Do-Not-Call
10 list, a State Do-Not-Call list, a DMA list, a Wireless do-Not-Call list, a client internal list, and a Very Important Person list.
37. The method according to Claim 27 wherein the lists of exempted destination
15 Relationship (EBR) exemption list, Do-Not-Call exemption lists, State Do-Not-Call exemption list, a VIP exemption list, and other exemption list.
38. The method according to Claim 37 wherein the exemption list contains any one
20 or combination of exemption key, type, and date of contact associated with each exempted destination identifier.
39. The method according to Claim 27 wherein the mediation rules comprise a
25 sequence of comparisons made between a destination identifier and one or more lists of exempted and prohibited identifiers; each comparison with a list of exempted identifiers determining whether comparison with an associated list or lists of prohibited destination identifiers is bypassed or ignored.
40. The method according to Claim 27 wherein the prohibited and exempted destination lists are capable of being modified from the origin.

41. The method according to Claim 27 wherein the prohibited and exempted destination lists are capable of being modified from a secondary interface.
- 5 42. The method according to Claim 27 wherein the receiving, prohibiting, or allowing are performed within a computer server that resides on the premises of any one of a client, a local exchange carrier, local administration facility, central administration facility, and other remote facility.
- 10 43. The method according to Claim 42 further comprising interfacing with local prohibited and exempted destination lists; the local prohibited and exempted destination lists being periodically synchronized with other prohibited and exempted destination lists; the other prohibited and exempted destination lists being remotely located at another facility such as a local administration facility, local exchange carrier, central administration facility, or other facility.
- 15 44. The method according to Claim 27 wherein receiving, prohibiting, or allowing are performed by a software application within a remote client computer.
- 20 45. The method according to Claim 44 wherein the software application within a client computer remotely accesses the prohibited and exempted lists within a central administration facility.
- 25 46. The method according to Claim 27 wherein prohibited and exempted destination lists may be dynamically added or removed and the mediation rules updated to flexibly adapt the system to continuously support new connection prohibition rules.
47. The method according to Claim 27 further comprising examining a plurality of destination identifiers in relation to a particular origin to determine whether to

prohibit or allow a communications connection between the origin and each destination of the plurality of destinations.

48. The method according to Claim 27 further comprising identifying and authenticating a client user.
49. The method according to Claim 27 wherein prohibiting or allowing is further based on client and customer information.
50. The method according to Claim 49 wherein the information includes any one or combination of a client user identifier, client identifier, customer identifier, product identifier, client office identifier, geographic area, date, time, exemption type duration, origin identifier, internal client criteria, and internal customer criteria.
51. The method according to Claim 27 further comprising generating logs of prohibited, allowed, and improper destination identifiers or a combination thereof.
52. A computer readable medium having computer readable program codes embodied therein for causing a computer to function as a control unit that selectively prohibits a communications connection between an origin and destination in a communications network, the computer readable medium program codes performing functions comprising:
- receiving or initiating a connection request for a communication connection between an origin and destination, the request including the destination identifier;
 - prohibiting or allowing the requested communications connection based on one or more mediation rules and lists of prohibited and exempted destination identifiers.

53. An analysis system for selectively designating whether a communications connections between an origin and one or more destinations are prohibited, the system comprising:
- 5 an interface unit that receives one or more proposed destination identifiers;
- at least one list of prohibited destination identifiers;
- at least one list of exempted destination identifiers; and
- an analysis unit that designates whether the communication connection
- 10 between an origin and one or more proposed destinations are prohibited or allowed based on one or more mediation rules and the list of prohibited and exempted destination identifiers.
54. The system according to Claim 53 wherein the origin and destination are each a
- 15 communications device connected to the communications network.
55. The system according to Claim 54 wherein the communications device is any one of a telephone, cellular telephone, personal digital assistance, pager, computer, computer client interface, and remote computer terminal.
- 20 56. The system according to Claim 53 wherein the identifier is a communications device address.
57. The system according to Claim 56 wherein the device address is any one of a
- 25 telephone number, Internet Protocol address, Internet Domain Name, and an electronic mail address.
58. The system according to Claim 53 wherein the lists are contained within one or more tables of one or more databases.

59. The system according to Claim 53 wherein the lists of prohibited destination identifiers are derived from any one or a combination of a Federal Do-Not-Call list, a State Do-Not-Call list, a DMA list, a Wireless do-Not-Call list, a client internal list, and a Very Important Person list.
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60. The system according to Claim 53 wherein the lists of exempted destination identifiers are derived from any one or a combination of an Existing Business Relationship (EBR) exemption list, Do-Not-Call exemption lists, State Do-Not-Call exemption list, a VIP exemption list, and other exemption list.
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61. The system according to Claim 60 wherein the exemption list contains any one or combination of exemption key, type, and date of contact associated with each exempted destination identifier.
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62. The system according to Claim 53 wherein the mediation rules comprise a sequence of comparisons made between a destination identifier and one or more lists of exempted and prohibited identifiers.
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63. The system according to Claim 62 wherein each comparison with a list of exempted identifiers determines whether the comparison with an associated list or lists of prohibited destination identifiers is bypassed or ignored.
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64. The system according to Claim 53 wherein the prohibited and exempted destination lists are capable of being modified from the origin.
65. The system according to Claim 53 wherein the prohibited and exempted destination lists are capable of being modified from a secondary interface.
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66. The system according to Claim 53 wherein the analysis unit is a software application within a remote client computer.

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67. The system according to Claim 66 wherein the analysis unit within a client computer remotely accesses the prohibited and exempted lists within a central administration facility.
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68. The system according to Claim 53 further comprising a client computer that remotely sends a certified list of proposed destination identifiers to the analysis unit whereupon the analysis unit designates prohibited and allowed destination identifiers and sends a designation list to the client computer.
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69. The system according to Claim 53 wherein prohibited and exempted destination lists may be dynamically added or removed and the mediation rules updated to flexibly adapt the system to continuously support new connection prohibition rules.
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70. The system according to Claim 53 wherein the analysis unit, based on the mediation rules, uses additional client and customer information to designate a prohibited or allowed communications connection.
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71. The system according to Claim 70 wherein the information includes any one or combination of a client user identifier, client identifier, customer identifier, product identifier, client office identifier, geographic area, date, time, exemption type duration, origin identifier, internal client criteria, and internal customer criteria.
72. The system according to Claim 53 wherein logs of prohibited, allowed, and improper destination identifiers or a combination thereof are generated.

73. The system according to Claim 53 wherein the interface unit is any one of a World Wide Web page, a ftp server, an database connection, a remote terminal connection, and Interactive Voice Response connection.
- 5 74. A method of selectively designating whether communications connections between an origin and one or more destinations in a communications network are prohibited, the method comprising:
- receiving one or more destination identifiers;
- designating whether the communications connection between the origin
- 10 and one or more destinations are prohibited or allowed based on one or more mediation rules and lists of prohibited and exempted destination identifiers.
75. The method according to Claim 74 wherein the origin and destination are each a communications device connected to the communications network.
- 15 76. The method according to Claim 75 wherein the communications device is any one of a telephone, cellular telephone, personal digital assistance, pager, computer, computer client interface, and remote computer terminal.
- 20 77. The method according to Claim 74 wherein the identifier is a communications device address.
78. The method according to Claim 77 wherein the device address is any one of a telephone number, Internet Protocol address, Internet Domain Name, and an
- 25 electronic mail address.
79. The method according to Claim 74 wherein the lists are contained within one or more tables or one or more databases.

80. The method according to Claim 74 wherein the lists of prohibited destination identifiers are derived from any one or a combination of a Federal Do-Not-Call list, a State Do-Not-Call list, a DMA list, a Wireless do-Not-Call list, a client internal list, and a Very Important Person list.
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81. The method according to Claim 74 wherein the lists of exempted destination identifiers are derived from any one or a combination of an Existing Business Relationship (EBR) exemption list, Do-Not-Call exemption lists, State Do-Not-Call exemption list, a VIP exemption list, and other exemption list.
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82. The method according to Claim 81 wherein the exemption list contains any one or combination of exemption key, type, and date of contact associated with each exempted destination identifier.
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83. The method according to Claim 74 wherein the mediation rules comprise a sequence of comparisons made between a destination identifier and one or more lists of exempted and prohibited identifiers; each comparison with a list of exempted identifiers determining whether comparison with an associated list or lists of prohibited destination identifiers is bypassed or ignored.
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84. The method according to Claim 74 wherein the prohibited and exempted destination lists are capable of being modified from the origin.
85. The method according to Claim 74 wherein the prohibited and exempted destination lists are capable of being modified from a secondary interface.
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86. The method according to Claim 74 wherein the receiving and designating are performed by a software application within a remote client computer.

87. The method according to Claim 86 wherein the software application remotely accesses the prohibited and exempted lists within a central administration facility.
- 5 88. The method according to Claim 74 further comprising receiving a certified list of proposed destination identifiers from a remote client computer and sending a designation list back to the client computer.
- 10 89. The method according to Claim 74 wherein prohibited and exempted destination lists may be dynamically added or removed and the mediation rules updated to flexibly adapt the system to continuously support new connection prohibition rules.
- 15 90. The method according to Claim 74 wherein designating prohibited or allowed communications connections is further based on client and customer information.
- 20 91. The method according to Claim 90 wherein the information includes any one or combination of a client user identifier, client identifier, customer identifier, client office identifier, product identifier, geographic area, date, time, exemption type duration, origin identifier, internal client criteria, and internal customer criteria.
- 25 92. The method according to Claim 74 further comprising generating logs of prohibited, allowed, and improper destination identifiers or a combination thereof.
93. The method according to Claim 74 wherein the receiving of proposed destination identifiers is facilitated by any one of a World Wide Web page, a ftp

server, an database connection, a remote terminal connection, and Interactive Voice Response connection.

94. A computer readable medium having computer readable program codes embodied therein for causing a computer to function as an analysis unit that selectively designates prohibited communications connections between an origin and one or more destinations in a communications network, the computer readable medium program codes performing functions comprising:
- 5 receiving one or more destination identifiers;
- 10 designating whether the communications connections between the origin and one or more destinations are prohibited or allowed based on one or more mediation rules and lists of prohibited and exempted destination identifiers.
95. A method of selectively prohibiting a communications connection between an origin and destination in a telecommunications network, the origin having a user interface for a client agent, the destination having a destination telephone number, the method comprising:
- 15 at the origin, establishing a communications connection with a connection unit;
- 20 at the connection unit, interacting with a control unit to validate the dialed number and, upon successful validation by the control unit, prompting the client agent for identification and authentication information;
- 25 at the origin, entering the identification and authentication information;
- at the connection unit, interacting with the control unit to validate the identification and authentication information and, upon successful validation by the control unit, prompting for the destination telephone number;
- 30 at the origin, entering the digits associated with a destination telephone number;
- at the connection unit, sending the destination telephone number to the control unit;

at the control unit,

verifying that the dialed area code of the destination telephone number is valid;

retrieving client-specific mediation rules;

5 prohibiting or allowing the communications connection based on the mediation rules, one or more prohibited destination number lists, and one or more exempted destination number lists, by sending a prohibit or allow order to the connection unit;

at the connection unit if the communications connection is allowed,
10 establishing a second communications connection with the destination and bridging the origin communications connection to the destination communications connection to establish a communications connection between origin and destination;

at the connection unit if the communications connection is prohibited,
15 ending the communications connection with the origin or notifying the client agent that the call is prohibited and prompting for entry of another destination telephone number.

96. The method according to Claim 93 wherein the mediation rules comprise a
20 sequence of comparisons made between a destination identifier and one or more lists of exempted and prohibited identifiers; each comparison with a list of exempted identifiers determining whether comparison with an associated list or lists of prohibited destination identifiers is bypassed.

25 97. A system for selectively prohibiting a communications connection between an origin and destination in a communications network, the system comprising:
means for receiving or initiating a connection request for a communication connection between an origin and destination, the request including the destination identifier;

means for prohibiting or allowing the requested communications connection based on one or more mediation rules and lists of prohibited and exempted destination identifiers.

- 5 98. A system for selectively designating whether communications connections between an origin and one or more destinations in a communications network are prohibited, the system comprising:

means for receiving one or more destination identifiers;

- 10 means for designating whether the communications connection between the origin and one or more destinations are prohibited or allowed based on one or more mediation rules and lists of prohibited and exempted destination identifiers.